



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE SCHOOL REVIEW

A JOURNAL OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

VOLUME XXIX

MARCH, 1921

NUMBER 3

Educational News and Editorial Comment

DEFINING GRADES

The City Superintendents' and High-School Principals' Council of Kansas adopted at its last meeting a grading plan which aims to make clear to students and teachers what a given grade means. The plan, with its attached definitions, is as follows:

The following qualities are observable in the high-school student and can be made the basis for deducting a valid estimate of progress in education: (1) scholarship; (2) initiative; (3) attitude; (4) co-operation; (5) individual improvement.

1. By scholarship we refer to the pupil's ability and skill in a comprehensive use of the subject-matter presented.

2. By initiative we refer to those spontaneous qualities that reveal the student as a group-leader and an efficient student.

3. By attitude we refer to the pupil's apparent point of view in matters vital to his education and to the success of the school.

4. By co-operation we refer to the pupil's effort and ability to stimulate and contribute to the group accomplishment.

5. By individual improvement we refer to the pupil's progress in overcoming weaknesses of personality, objectionable habits, poor penmanship, and other difficulties.

The following letters are used to designate grades: A, B, C, D, and F, the last being the failing grade.

DEFINITION OF GRADES

Grade of A:

1. Scholarship—Exceeding expectations of instructor.
2. Initiative—Contributions exceeding the assignment.
3. Attitude—Positive benefit to the class.
4. Co-operation—Forwarding all group activities.
5. Individual improvement—Actual and noticeable.

Grade of B:

1. Scholarship—Accurate and complete.
2. Initiative—Stimulating some desirable achievements.
3. Attitude—Proper and beneficial.
4. Co-operation—Effective in group work.
5. Individual improvement—Showing marks of progress.

Grade of C:

1. Work in general of medium quality.
2. Work quite strong in one or more items but weak in others.

Grade of D (this grade might be produced by any variety or combination of weaknesses as the definition suggests):

1. Scholarship—Barely meeting assignments.
2. Initiative—Uncertain, not usually manifest.
3. Attitude—Not objectionable, usually neutral.
4. Co-operation—Not positive nor very effective.
5. Individual improvement—Slight, not positive.

Grade of F:

1. This is a failing grade and since it may result from any number of weaknesses is not defined.

Distribution of Grades:

This is a very important factor of this system of grading. Within the class and within the school it is expected that a proper respect be paid to the normal curve of frequency. However, the grades are not to be made primarily for the purpose of fitting the curve. The curve is to be used as a check to see what the "norm" should be under usual conditions and with large enough groups. It is expected that a teacher be able to justify his variation in grade distribution from the normal curve of frequency.

Normal Curve of Frequency:

The curve is built upon the following percentages: A—7 per cent, B—24 per cent, C—38 per cent, D—24 per cent, F—7 per cent.

FUNCTION OF THIS SYSTEM

With this code a teacher should grade carefully and be able to defend every grade given. It should be pointed out to the student with a low grade that he is falling short of the standard in some one of these valuable qualities. Teachers have long felt the need of definite points of defense when questioned about a grade, but these five desirable qualities need emphasis and should be

used in conferences with students. It is essential that students understand this system as thoroughly as do the teachers. This will give students a secure sense of direction in attempting improvement.

In this grading system teachers should bear in mind that grades are given on a comparative basis only; every student's work is to be compared with that of every other student with whom he works, and grades are to be arranged according to his ranking in the class. This will apply to every point under the "Definition of Grades" as scheduled. In no case is any grade to be translated to or thought of in terms of percentages, but students are to learn that if they make A or B grades, they are considered to belong to approximately the upper one-third of the class; if they are C students, they belong to approximately the middle one-third of the class; and if they rank below C, they are among approximately the lower one-third of the class.

WEIGHTED CREDITS

(Suggested by the committee but not recommended unless it received the sanction of the state department.)

1. Grade of A for unit subject, 1.2 units.
2. Grade of B for unit subject, 1.1 units.
3. Grade of C for unit subject, 1 unit.
4. Grade of D for unit subject, .9 unit.
5. Grade of F for unit subject, no credit.

(A copy of the plan in this form should be in the hands of each of your teachers. Also, each teacher should be expected to construct a curve of grades at the end of each period and hand to the principal or supervising official. These sheets and cards with the proper graph form can be obtained from members of the committee at cost price provided there is sufficient demand to warrant a continuance of this service.)

The part of this plan which is doubtful in the mind of the present writer is that which makes emphatic the advice on distribution of grades. Taken as a general guide, this table of distribution has justified itself under the present system of teaching. That there is grave danger of a purely formal use of the scheme of distributing grades is recognized by everyone who has seen the probability curve fall into the hands of those who do not understand its deviation and its limitations.

The committee which prepared the plan reported above has been careful to point out that the distribution is merely a guide and not a fixed formula. No effort should be spared to keep that part of the report far in the foreground so that "norm" will not be mistaken for "rule."

COLLEGES AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

Mr. Ryan, educational editor of the *New York Evening Post*, includes the following paragraphs in a report of the meeting of the Association of American Colleges:

The three-day session of the Association of American Colleges, which ended here this morning, definitely places the association as a determining factor henceforward in American education. To those who remember the somewhat dubious beginnings of six years ago the development is little short of marvelous.

Take the reports presented yesterday and this morning. Here was an organization only half a dozen years in the field—and part of these war years—laying down on the table carefully prepared and concisely worded statements of principles and application affecting American colleges.

Seldom has a better demonstration been afforded of the value of letting people do their own investigating.

Starting out with something of a note of protest against what was regarded as the imposition of severe standards from outside, the association is now in a fair way to set standards for itself that are notably more severe than anyone would have suggested for it, in such things as admission requirements, scholarship, and regular and honorary degrees.

Sentiment for rigorous standards was in part responsible for the decidedly chilly shoulder the convention turned to the paper by David Mackenzie, of Detroit, on the junior college. President Mackenzie has a really big conception of a unified educational plan. More than that he is actually running a junior college in Detroit of a thousand students, taught by instructors who have had both university and secondary-school experience, and are surely better equipped than were the college Freshmen and Sophomore instructors many of us knew to our sorrow fifteen and twenty years ago.

But Mackenzie talked in an exasperatingly cool way about eventually granting the A.B. after three years of intensive work and other departures from normalcy, and it was plain to see he horrified a group that had been conscientiously adjusting itself to self-imposed standards.

Dr. Wilson Farrand, of Newark Academy, made clear that as far as he was concerned he had no quarrel with the junior-college idea, but he did object to what he termed extending secondary education upward two years. Dr. Augustus S. Downing, of the New York State Department, explained that his department was withholding recognition of the new work chiefly because it was still in the experimental stage.

It is indeed a shock to most people who are devoted to the upbuilding of the college of the conventional type to find that the

junior college is expanding. It is a shock to a great many high-school people to learn that the colleges of the country must probably turn over to municipalities in increasing degree the support of Freshman and Sophomore courses. It is a shock to many people to learn that the college is going to be seriously affected in the long run by the oncoming six-year elementary school and by the new kind of a high school which is being evolved out of the junior high school movement. But the most wholesome advice that can be given to all such people is to prepare themselves as best they can for the shock because it is sure to become more intense.

The junior colleges, too, have an association. Before this editorial appears in print that association will have held its second annual session. It will not make any great difference to this new association whether the Department of Higher Education of the University of New York thinks of the junior college as experimental or established or whether it decides in its wisdom to lend it the influence of its acceptance or not. The main fact is that the junior college is here as one of those inevitable reorganizations of our educational system which expresses the determination of the American people to make higher education easily accessible to all kinds of young people.

It would seem to the student of educational history that the Association of American Colleges would do well to take this new institution seriously. The fact is that many of the members of the association are in reality junior colleges. A very large fraction of the small colleges of this country change their student population each year by 50 per cent. A great number of the colleges find that their students leave and go to professional schools after two years. Colleges of this type may refuse to think of the junior college as worthy of association with real colleges, but the time is not far off when this snobbish formula may rebound to their own disadvantage.

The wise course which should be adopted by everybody who is really interested in education as distinguished from the fate of some particular institution or institutions is undoubtedly that of getting acquainted as intimately as possible with this newcomer, the junior college.

THE JOHN HANDLEY FOUNDATION OF WINCHESTER, VIRGINIA

There are each year a number of new foundations and gifts in the different cities. As practically all of these gifts are in perpetuity, the sum grows from year to year, and the final total is beyond calculation. Beginning with the endowment of churches and universities, we have gone on to the building and endowing of public libraries, Y.M.C.A's and Y.W.C.A's, public parks, playgrounds, community houses, and many other things.

The John Handley Foundation of Winchester, Virginia, is an interesting recent gift to the public welfare. Mr. John Handley, a resident of Scranton, Pennsylvania, spent his summers in Winchester. He fell in love with the town and made it his heir. He built for it a handsome public library and left the balance of his property, which was to accumulate for twenty years, for the purpose of public education. This property is now valued at more than \$2,000,000, and the annual revenue constitutes a handsome allowance for a city of 9,000 inhabitants.

The trustees of the foundation recently asked the General Education Board to make a survey of the educational needs of Winchester and to recommend what should be done with this income. The board recommended that it should be used for extra educational advantages above those provided by the ordinary tax rate, that Winchester might have a model school system. The school board called F. E. Clerk, Assistant Superintendent of Schools of Cleveland, to be superintendent. It has secured a site of about forty acres and plans by one of the foremost school architects, and is about to build a model school building one story in height, inclosing a good-sized rectangle.

This suggests a way that teachers themselves may leave behind a memorial which with the years may become of great importance in the home locality. One thousand dollars put out at compound interest for two hundred years at 5 per cent, would amount to more than \$4,000,000, or \$256,000,000 in three hundred years. It is thus within the reach of most teachers to create a great foundation that may in time be a dominating influence in the home locality.

H. S. CURTIS

BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES

The Secretary of the Public Education Association of New York City has summarized in a bulletin the struggle which is going on at the present time in New York State and especially in New York City to subordinate the schools to the authorities in control of municipal government. It has been pointed out in the *School Review* in discussing similar situations, as, for example, that which exists today in Chicago and also in a number of other large cities of the country, that the sharp competition for public funds is at bottom the cause of the numerous efforts which are being made to bring the schools under political domination. It is folly for school people to shut their eyes to the fact that cities are in real distress in their efforts to expand schools. It is a mistake to assume that more support is to be had by the mere asking. The fact is that municipal authorities are seeking control of schools because schools cost so much. It is not clear, even to them, what they are going to do about the matter when they get control, but we may be certain that they will not willingly give schools the preference in competition with material improvements needed, or thought to be needed, by the city.

As a concrete illustration of the extent of this struggle for control and as a vigorous statement of some of the dangers of political control, the following may be quoted from the bulletin mentioned:

The first effort in the present session of the Legislature to strengthen the grip of the municipal authorities upon the control of the schools has appeared as Senate No. 50, introduced by Senator George R. Fearon, of Syracuse, and entitled, briefly, "An Act to Amend the Education Law in Relation to the Fixing of Salaries of the Supervising and Teaching Staffs in Cities."

We are unalterably opposed to this measure.

The purpose and significance of this bill have been characterized by the Acting State Commissioner of Education as follows:

"It transfers the power to fix salaries of all members of the supervising and teaching staffs from the board of education to the board of estimate and apportionment, the common council, board of aldermen or other body having the power to fix salaries of city employees. It applies to all cities in which the salaries of superintendents, principals, and teachers are included in the city budget and raised by city tax.

“This bill if enacted into law would result in further confusion and conflict in school administration. It would practically nullify the control of school authorities over the city schools. It would tend to politicalize the teaching service and prevent the employment of teachers and their preferment in the service solely upon merit and experience. It deprives the board of education of a city of its responsibility for the efficiency of the supervising and teaching staff and transfers such responsibility to city authorities. The power to fix salaries carries with it necessarily the power to determine the qualifications and efficiency of the officers and employees affected.”

To those who have followed the history of legislative proposals during the past few years, this effort to turn the schools over to municipal political control is not new. It is simply an old story with a new name. Perennially reappearing since the days when the present school system was first organized, this type of legislation has repeatedly met with failure. Nevertheless, like a sturdy weed it springs anew.

This Fearon Bill is likewise but another expression of the position of the present administration upon school control, made manifest last year in its attitude on teachers' salary legislation and in numerous bills seeking to make the school system more completely a department of the municipal government. It echoes the keynote of the Comptroller's eloquence at the Citizens' Conference on Education at the Chamber of Commerce last Saturday and reaffirms the position of our City Fathers that the Board of Education should not have financial independence. This bill aims to accomplish the desire to make the Board of Education little more than a rubber stamp or a pawn in the game of scheming politicians.

The attitude of the Public Education Association towards such legislation is emphatically negative.

We maintain today as we have in the past that the Board of Education should be the head of the local public-school system and as such have full power to formulate all policies and, under wise minimum provisions in the state education law, to determine the qualifications, number, and compensation of all employees needed to carry out such policies. The Board of Education cannot perform this function adequately unless its responsibility and control are unquestioned and unless it is granted by law an annual allowance sufficient to meet the needs of the department. To be fully effective the Board of Education must not be subjected to the annual mental aberrations of opportunistic office seekers who think inevitably of votes and the tax rate first and of the children's welfare last.

The present intolerable situation in the New York City schools is largely due to the efforts of the city authorities to take unto themselves the destiny of public education and to place that destiny last in importance among other municipal functions. There is much in the way of improving the public schools that can be demanded of the school authorities alone, but until they are free to perform their legitimate duties unhampered the public cannot,

with justice, hold them strictly accountable for results. The first step toward real progress in the public schools, therefore, is to concentrate responsibility for public education where it belongs—in the Board of Education. This would at once clear away the present confusion in the public mind regarding responsibility and establish clearly the direction in which future public pressure can be exerted to make the schools fit places for the rearing of children.

The Fearon Bill proposes action in the wrong direction. It would place the schools more firmly in the hands of the politicians. It would intensify the confusion of control and responsibility that has made the administration of public education in this community a scandal. It should be promptly defeated. The energies of every public-spirited citizen should be exerted to securing legislation pointing in the opposite direction, legislation that will create a clear-cut, responsible, and energetic administration of our system of public education, lodged in the Board of Education.

THE "DETROIT JOURNAL OF EDUCATION"

The Detroit school system issued in December of last year the first number of an educational journal which is described as "published by the Board of Education in the interest of intermediate and high schools." The publication is more elaborate in form than most of the educational journals that are issued by municipalities. It has the form of a magazine. The first number contains eighty-three pages. The editor and managing editor are Superintendent C. L. Spain and Mr. C. C. Certain, of the Northwestern High School.

The introductory editorial indicates the scope of the *Journal's* activities and is as follows:

The *Detroit Journal of Education*, which makes its initial appearance with this number, is published by the Board of Education in the interest of intermediate and secondary-school teachers. While the circulation of the magazine must of necessity be limited, it is hoped that its outlook may be broad and progressive and that it shall stand for a forward-looking policy in education. It will undertake to reflect the views of leaders in education throughout the country, and each number will contain contributions by educators of national prominence. It will aim to stimulate and encourage teachers to apply the principles of research to all educational problems, and to this end will open its columns to meritorious contributions based upon scientific studies. The great social objectives are held to constitute the aims of all educational endeavor, and this magazine will promote a realization of these aims throughout the Detroit school system. It is expected that this periodical will exert an important influence in the development of a constructive educational policy in the intermediate and secondary schools of this city.

The *Journal* ought to reach other school systems and influence them to take the position that Detroit has taken so successfully, namely, the position that a school system can carry on its own routine most advantageously only when attention is given to careful, scientific studies of results and of plans of operation. The printing of articles with regard to the Detroit system itself will undoubtedly stimulate the officers of the school system more than any contributions that can be made by outside writers. At the same time other school systems can get a view of what is going on in Detroit in much greater detail than would be possible if the system did not have an organ for the presentation of such discussions.

The *Detroit Journal of Education* is a welcome addition to the increasing body of educational literature of a high grade which is beginning to appear in school journals of the modern progressive type.

CIVICS FOR HIGH SCHOOLS

A committee of the American Political Science Association presented at a recent meeting a report on the present situation with regard to the teaching of civics in American high schools. The report reiterates the statements which have frequently been made in similar documents in recent years, but it is perhaps worth while to bring to the attention of those who are formulating the curriculum of the high school the urgent necessity of creating a new body of material different from any that is now actually in use in high schools.

There is a very widespread conviction, as this report and others like it show, that there must be a radical change in the type of instruction given young people with regard to the nature and organization of society. The report concludes with the statement that there must be new textbooks and a better training of teachers. The repetition of this conclusion ought sooner or later to produce effective results.

The report in full is as follows:

An authoritative definition of what should be included in the school curriculum under the heading of "civics" is urgently needed. Some years ago this term was commonly understood to include a study of political organization

and relations; but its scope has been steadily broadened until today it is customarily regarded as an elementary study comprising not only the outline of civil government, but some sociology, social ethics, economics, personal hygiene, and so on, all of which are presented in a very elementary form.

This extension of scope from civil government to other fields of social science is probably wise. The schools and the community seem to demand it. Teachers of civics, taking them as a whole, appear to approve the extension. It would be unwise, the committee believes, for the American Political Science Association to lend its influence to any rigid restriction of this subject within its original bounds. On the other hand, the extension of "civics" to cover so many other things is likely to result in giving the schools a subject which is far too broad for anything but the most superficial study. The association's committee of seven called attention to this danger several years ago and said that "thoroughness is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, need of the public-school system at the present time."

The committee suggests, therefore, that the association go on record as expressing its conviction that the subject of civics in schools should relate primarily to the study of civil government and political relations in the United States, although there is no serious objection to the inclusion of so much study of social and economic relations as may be necessary to give the pupil a fair knowledge of the environment in which he lives.

If it is desirable that a high-school course should deal mainly with matters other than government, the term "social problems," or "social and economic problems," or "elementary sociology," or "citizenship," or some other properly descriptive term should be used.

The aims of civic instruction, as stated in the report of the association's committee of seven, published in 1916, should be as follows:

1. To awaken a knowledge of the fact that the citizen is in a social environment whose laws bind him for his own good.
2. To acquaint the citizen with the forms of organization and methods of administration of government in its several departments.

In the case of schools the immediate problem is to bring to the mind of the pupil the fact that he is a living member of the community. The teaching of the subject should continually point toward active civic duty as well as toward civic rights. Scope and methods should be adjusted to this purpose, which means that the scope should not be confined to government alone and that emphasis should be put upon relations rather than upon facts.

One of the results of teaching government in the high schools should be to bring about an intelligent attitude toward the progress of political institutions along lines which are by the common consent of political scientists regarded as desirable. Intelligent instruction can achieve this purpose without degenerating into propaganda for reforms on which there may be a wide difference of opinion.

The teaching of civics in high schools has hitherto suffered greatly from the lack of trained teachers. Too often the subject has been handed over to some member of the teaching staff as an "extra." "The old textbook style of instruction with the memorization of constitutions, names of officers, etc., was relatively simple, and it is not surprising that the subject of civics was assigned to some member of the high-school faculty to fill an otherwise incomplete schedule."

The subject is of too great importance in the school curriculum to be treated in this way. It will not be handled properly until it is placed in the hands of teachers who are trained to teach it. Training in methods can now be had in most of the summer schools of the country; but it would be of service to those teachers who cannot attend a summer-school course if aids to teaching such as those which are available for teachers of American history could be prepared and placed at their disposal.

Let it be clearly borne in mind, however, that training in the methods of teaching is not of itself sufficient. A teacher of civics is not properly equipped unless an adequate knowledge of the subject has been used as the foundation of his or her training in methods of teaching.

No method will achieve results without trained teachers, but with properly trained teachers a general improvement in methods would not be slow in making itself apparent. No fixed set of rules can be or ought to be laid down as regards the proper method of teaching civics in schools. Every school should be encouraged to use its own initiative.

Yet in this, as in all other subjects of the high-school curriculum, there are some general principles which teachers of civics can follow without any sacrifice of their own initiative. In the nature of things a good deal of dependence must always be placed by teachers upon the textbook which is selected for school use, no matter how much this is supplemented by outside reading, discussions, debates, field work, etc. The improvement of textbooks is, therefore, an important matter.

NEWS ITEMS FROM SECONDARY SCHOOLS

RECORD CARD IN QUALITIES OF CITIZENSHIP

Oakland High School, Oakland, California.—The elementary schools of this city are recognizing on their report cards some of the elements of good citizenship, and the high schools are making personal-quality graphs. With the thought of placing additional emphasis in the mind of all high-school students upon the need for progressive development in social ideals and habits, a new form of report card is being tried out in the Oakland High School. A card is filled out for each pupil and sent to his home.

OAKLAND HIGH SCHOOL—STUDENT'S RECORD

..... Subject Name (Surname First) No. (Advisory)	
Term ending 19....	 Instructor No.	
Report Periods	1	2	3	Term	Parent's Signature	i.	s.
PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT							
Open-mindedness.....							
Seriousness of purpose.....							
Assumption of responsibility.....							
Willingness to co-operate.....							
Thoroughness.....							
Initiative.....							
Systematic methods of working.....							
Knowledge of the subject.....							
Behavior.....							
Physical fitness.....							
Prompt and regular attendance.....							

Marking will be upon progressive development—1—Exceptional, 2—Satisfactory, 3—Fair, 4—Unsatisfactory. Elements contributing to progressive development will be checked (✓) only when unsatisfactory. 1 or 2 will be necessary for recommendation to the university; 3, for promotion.

The following statement of “The Goal of Education in a Democracy” appears on the reverse side of the card:

In a democracy, a symmetrical training of the individual is all important. In the high schools of Oakland, the object of our work is to develop intelligent, efficient, responsible, and socially-conscious citizens. This demands that each course should really be a course in citizenship; that is, each individual student should acquire in each course not only a knowledge of the subject taught, but also those interests, ideals, habits, and powers whereby he may find his place and use that place to shape both himself and society towards ever nobler ends.

Accordingly, those qualities which have social significance are made the basis for determining the progress of the individual student.

The card carries a list of desirable social qualities, progressive development in which means growing fitness for citizenship. Pupils are made aware of the fact that they are under constant observation by proper officials, who are each term recording a careful estimate of their progress in civic moral habits. All doubt is removed as to what the school regards as essential in social deportment.

Initial experiences in the use of the card indicate that its effectiveness is greatly increased by small classes, by individualized instruction, by homogeneous grouping, and by a sliding scale of requirements for each of the ability groups.

ROY T. GRANGER